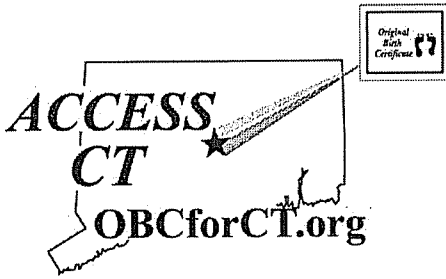


February, 8, 2011



Honorable Diana S. Urban
Co-Chair Select Committee on Children
Room 011, Capitol Building
Hartford, CT 06106
Phone 860-240-0370

Dear Senator Urban,

I write today in opposition to Raised Bill 890 that would provide adult adopted persons, twenty-one years of age or older, whose adoptions were finalized after October 1, 2012, with access to their biological parents' health information and information in the person's original birth certificate or record. In 1974 Connecticut *retroactively* sealed adoptees original birth certificates from them.

As members of **ACCESS CONNECTICUT** we believe that Connecticut adoptees have been denied the human right that all other residents of Connecticut have – the right to obtain non-certified copies of their original, un-amended birth certificates from the vital records office. **ACCESS CONNECTICUT** firmly believes that Raised Bill 890 falls significantly short of restoring the right to all adult adoptees to their original identity.

Eight states including Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, Kansas, Maine, New Hampshire, Oregon and Tennessee allow adult adoptees in their state to obtain a copy of the original birth certificate. New Hampshire (2004) and Maine (2007) *passed retroactive legislation* allowing all its adult adoptees to obtain a non-certified copy of their OBC. In both states nearly 70% of its legislators voted in favor of restoring the human right to its native born adult adoptees to obtain their OBC.

New Hampshire and Maine both passed legislation that balances the rights of adoptees to receive their OBC while allowing birthparents to indicate their desire for contact by their birth son or daughter. The *contact preference option* allows birth parents three options for contact with their biological child as follows:

- I would like to be contacted.
- I do not want to be contacted
- I would like to be contacted through an intermediary

In New Hampshire or Maine no fiscal note was required to implement SB335 or LD 1084. The new law has resulted in New Hampshire Vital Records collecting over \$20,000 since it went into effect. New Hampshire and Maine Vital Records also modeled their websites, forms and procedures on lessons learned by Oregon which allowed them to implement this new policy almost seamlessly.

ACCESS CONNECTICUT supports passing retroactive legislation in Connecticut similar to New Hampshire and in Maine that balances the rights of adoptees to receive their OBC while allowing birthparents to indicate their desire for contact by their birth son or daughter. We would also like to bring to the committee's attention an opportunity this coming Wednesday, February 9th at the statehouse, to listen to Elizabeth Samuel's, Professor, University of Baltimore School of Law who will be giving her presentation Adoption, Identity, and Confidentiality: The History of Closed Records. This presentation will clearly show how unjust it was to seal adoptees birth records in Connecticut in 1974 and how unjust Raised Bill 890 would be if it were to pass.

Sincerely,
Paul Schibbelhute
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